DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 265 655 EA 018 151

TITLE	Alternative Education Programs for Disruptive Students.
INSTITUTION	New Jersey State Dept. of Education, Trenton.
PUB DATE	Jun 84
NOTE	55p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Behavior Problems; Discipline; Elementary Secondary Education; Guidance Programs; Program Content; *Program Development; Program Evaluation; *Program Implementation; *Programs; Student Behavior; Student Needs
IDENTIFIERS	*Alternatives to Suspension

ABSTRACT

This guide provides information about various types of alternative education programs that address the educational and behavioral needs of disruptive students. The programs suggested are aimed at students whose behavior is so disruptive that they must be removed from classes or from the school for varying lengths of time. These programs provide disruptive students with the special support and assistance they need to develop more responsible patterns of behavior, while helping them succeed in school and preventing them from interfering with the learning of others. The document has three major sections. The first derives a conceptual framework for developing alternative educational programs from the literature. The second describes individual program models identified as effective by the National Diffusion Network and the National School Resource Network. The third and last section describes a planning and implementation approach that might be applied to both program model selection and program implementation at the local level. The guide includes a list of general references and references on other programs for "at risk" students. (PGD)

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NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

EA 018 151

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FOR

DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

SAUL COOPERMAN
Commissioner

New Jersey State Department of Education
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June, 1984

PTM 400.11

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FOREWORD

Disruptive behavior in the schools is a serious concern of New Jersey educators, students and the public. Discipline is perceived by the public as one of the most important problems facing public schools. Governor Thomas H. Kean underscored this concern in his address, Education in New Jersey: A Blueprint for Reform, before a joint session of the legislature on September 6, 1983. The Governor pointed out that:

> A disruptive child does not learn and prevents other students from learning. Disruptive behavior in the classroom can stop even the best teacher from doing his or her job. We must not allow the pollution of our classrooms by noise or violence.

My concern for a well-disciplined, orderly school was also expressed in my annual address to the convocation of chief school administrators in October, 1983. I shared my strong belief with the local educational leaders that the classroom must be an orderly environment where learning can take place.

Creating such an environment requires a thoughtful and cooperative process. Accordingly, we must all pull together in working to solve the problems posed by disruptive students. First, we must define the behaviors that we will not tolerate. Second, we must back up our policies and codes with firm action. Then we must find alternative programs that will take disruptive students out of the regular classrooms.

Disruptive students need special support and assistance to develop more responsive patterns of behavior. At the same time, however, they must be allowed to make educational progress in order to achieve the local school district proficiencies, to earn the required course credits and to receive a state-endorsed diploma.

Therefore, providing school districts with models, in-service education and assistance in developing educational alternatives for disruptive students is a critical objective of the New Jersey State Department of Education.

We have prepared this guide as a resource to help local school districts address this pressing concern.

Saul Cooperman
Commissioner of Education
June, 1984

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I. INTRODUCTION

Concerns over violence, vandalism and disruption in the schools have resulted in the current interest in alternative education programs for disruptive students. Proposed approaches to these problems must have a broad perspective to effect solutions, since the causes are complex and frequently difficult to overcome. Basic skills deficiencies, frustration, alienation, negative self-concept and a school environment that often provides insufficient encouragement for the confused or angry student all contribute to the problem. Solutions that have as the primary focus the reduction of violence, vandalism and disruptive behavior in schools without addressing these broader problems will be at best only partially effective and at worst a breach of professional responsibility to provide students the opportunity for success and fulfillment.

Alternative education programs can be established for students whose patterns of behavior (chronic discipline problems, dropping out of school, violence/vandalism, truancy, absenteeism, persistent failure, substance abuse) have been generally disruptive to their own education as well as to their classmates'. Arrangements other than conventional school programs provide these students with the special support and assistance they need to develop more responsible patterns of behavior, while protecting the safety of others and maintaining an environment conducive to learning and teaching. Such programs can revitalize the curriculum and school environment by providing an atmosphere which is caring, friendly, accepting and non-punitive. Therefore, the alternative education concept must not be viewed as a strategy of reaction and containment but one of professional deliberation and concern.

> For to only develop programs to reduce out-of-school suspensions without concentrating on the behavioral, social and psychological difficulties of students, as well as the organization of schools, merely provides temporary treatment to a growing cancer affecting the well-being and social climate of the nation's public schools (Garibaldi, 1979, NIE Conference Report on InSchool Alternatives to Suspension, p. 59).

A variety of approaches are required to meet the varying educational, behavioral, social and psychological needs of students who are disruptive and not experiencing success in schools. Since many of these students can benefit from alternative programs, it is important that they not be deprived of such an opportunity for success and fulfillment.

The program completion provision, contained in New Jersey's State Board of Education regulations (N.J.A.C. 6:8-4.2(d)ii), offers educators a legal basis and encouragement for establishing alternative education programs. See Alternative Education Programs: A Guide for Implementation, (N.J. State Department of Education, 1981) for an elaboration of the program completion option, a listing of program elements and an individualized program planning guide.

This guide provides information about various types of alternative education programs that have been developed to address the educational and behavioral needs of disruptive students and to facilitate an "idea exchange" for promoting promising practices in the area of alternative education for disruptive students. The guide offers valuable information to school personnel who are involved in planning, developing and implementing alternative education programs that address the needs of the disruptive students who are experiencing educational or behavioral problems in school.

The intention is not to identify or create a list of "cookbook" recipes for resolving the classroom difficulties created by disruptive students. It is, rather, an attempt to identify a conceptual framework from which a local school district, with assistance from the office of the county superintendent of schools and the regional curriculum service units of the New Jersey State Department of Education, could draw upon to create its own approach to addressing the problem of disruptive students. In that way, each district can design and/or adopt programs to address specific problems, in specific settings, for specific students. Although the guide includes descriptions of model programs, in many instances schools will need to make adaptations of parts of programs in order to meet their needs.

The number of programs and approaches providing alternatives for disruptive students only, are limited. Traditionally, the most disruptive students in our schools have been suspended or expelled from schools. For these young people whose behavior is so severe or illegal that incarceration is required, one alternative has been to involve the juvenile justice system. A number of states have county or state reform schools for such students.

Some educators have concentrated their efforts on developing preventive programs and have included alienated and disaffected youth in their definitions of the disruptive student. Many of these programs work exceptionally well for a wide variety of students exhibiting a range of behaviors in disrupting the educational process.

However, this guide is more narrowly focused on the <u>disruptive</u> student and does not include programs and approaches that address a more generic set of student problems. It is our intent to focus on those students whose disruption is serious enough to warrant removal from classes or the school for varying lengths of time. Review of the research and best practices for this student population shows that for disruptive students, fewer tried and tested program options exist. We face the challenge of eliminating the disruptive student from the environment where he or she interferes with schooling while simulatenously providing such students with an opportunity to continue their education.

The programs and approaches suggested in this guide provide disruptive students with the special support and assistance they need to develop more responsible patterns of behavior while helping them succeed in school and eliminating their interference with the learning of other

students. The guide is also intended to serve as the basis for subsequent Department of Education technical assistance and staff development activities that will facilitate local district planning and implementation of alternative education programs for disruptive students.

The document has three major sections.

The first section provides a conceptual framework for developing alternative educational programs for disruptive youth. It includes a description of characteristics associated with effective programs.

Another section provides descriptions of individual program models that have been identified and considered effective with disruptive students through the National Diffusion Network (NDN) and the National School Resource Network (NSRN).

The final section focuses on the requirements for implementing new programs at the local district level. It describes a generic planning/implementation approach that might be used by educational leaders to address both the issue of program content or program "model" selection and the process of implementation.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

> I do not know whether if things change they will get better, but what I do know is this, if things are to get better then they must change.
>
> George Lichtendert
> German Philosopher

Students who are disruptive in school cause serious problems for themselves and for the school. They interrupt learning, their own as well as other students', and they affect school climate. They are disruptive for complex reasons, stemming partially from personal and family problems and from a school climate that may be ill-suited to their educational and social needs. Many do not succeed in the conventional instructional settings and as a result frequently disrupt the educational process.

In addition, a significant number of youth involved in delinquency also reflect a history of negative school experiences. Studies seeking to identify the relative importance of a number of variables contributing to delinquent behavior indicate that school factors play a direct role in school violence. These factors are independent of family wealth, structure and size; employment conditions; juvenile law enforcement practices or other conditions found in the larger society (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1980, p.3).

According to the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University, schools can implement programs that make them safer places for students and teachers, reduce teacher victimization, improve student attendance and student self-concepts and teacher morale, and reduce student alienation and rebelliousness (CSOS, 1983). Providing opportunities for a greater proportion of students to experience success in school appears to be an important goal for educational programs seeking to prevent violence, vandalism and disruption. Such approaches are also necessary to avoid the "pushout" phenomenon whereby students decide to leave school because of frustration from not achieving success or because of pressure exerted by the school through various disciplinary actions.

Actions such as suspension and expulsion of large numbers of students have been frequently used by school authorities. It has been the prevailing belief and/or hope that such action (removing the troubled/troublesome student) would preserve a climate in the school conducive to better teaching and learning. However, a better and more appropriate approach, which has been tried and is gaining support, is the alternative education concept established for students described as "chronically disruptive." Such approaches accept the responsibility for providing subject matter and/or teaching strategies that are not generally offered to students in conventional school settings so that disruptive students learn more responsible behavior and the competencies necessary for productive lives.

Definitions

The programs described in this guide can benefit students considered "chronically disruptive," students whose behavior consistently interferes with other students' learning and requires increasing amounts of teacher time and attention. These students exhibit patterns of behavior that interfere with the educational process and may result in frequent disciplinary actions and suspensions, and often occur in conjunction with poor academic performance. Their behavior is characterized by difficulty in abiding by the rules and regulations of the regular school program, difficulty in establishing good relationships with peers and/or adult authority figures, ongoing discipline problems, persistent failure, and violent behavior. This guide is specifically directed to this student population. Students who misbehave on occasion or whose behavior is simply irriating or who voice disagreement with particular school rules are not included. Administrators and teachers must use caution in determining which students require the alternative approaches described in this guide. A wide variety of behaviors that are unacceptable in classrooms can be decreased by increasing academic engagement in meaningful classroom learning activities and improved classroom management.

Over the years the alternative school approach has been extensively used as a model for realizing diverse aims and recommended for an array of separate purposes (Raywid, 1983). Its use in this guide is limited to disruptive students.

Alternative education programs for disruptive students provide learning opportunities suitable to students' special needs, values, interests, talents and aspirations. Such programs are in places somewhat removed from the regular school--a separate wing or building. They are organizationally small, offering students an opportunity to know everyone and be known by everyone. Curriculum, instruction and counseling are to a large extent tailored to individual needs.

The bibliography in Appendix B, prepared by the Center for the Study of Educational Alternatives at Hofstra University presents references related to research dealing with "marginal" and "at risk" students. Much of the etiology and treatments are similar to those for disruptive students.

Working Assumptions and Objectives

An important aim of providing differentiated programs for disruptive students is the development of approaches successful at keeping students in school and preventing disruptive behavior as well as unwarranted and arbitrary suspensions and expulsions, dropouts, "pushouts" and truancy. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

(1980, pp. 2-3) successful programs are based on the following working assumptions:

(a) Delinquent behavior evolves from social environments which limit positive youth development in the areas of social competence, a sense of belonging and usefulness.

(b) School experiences can be altered to minimize the school's contribution to delinquency by changing the structure and the educational processes of schools.

(c) The availability of alternative educational opportunities is a viable means of enabling students to experience academic success, improving the quality of interaction between adults and youths, and strengthening student commitment to schools.

(d) Students who have little stake in achievement in schools, and in conformity to the rules of conventional schools, often become alienated, are more likely to engage in delinquent activities, and are more likely to be unemployed.

The preponderance of research on alternative schools for disruptive students is founded on the premise that the student role is central and critical for American adolescents. "Therefore, failure in this role, constitutes a substantial threat to adolescents' self-esteem" (Mann and Gold, 1981). This link between immediate school experiences and disruptive behavior suggests the possibility that schools contribute to delinquent behavior. Therefore, it is important that schools with high rates of student disruption engage in an analysis of conditions that might unintentionally foster disruption. Removing disruptive students to alternative settings will allow such an analysis to occur in an atmosphere that is not crisis-ridden.

The authors of the Safe Schools Study (1978) sponsored by The National Institute of Education found that student disruption was reduced when the entire staff of a school worked toward school improvement and focused on setting higher expectations for student achievement. That conclusion has been further supported by research conducted in inner city schools in London that shows that schools with certain characteristics can and do make a difference to so-called disadvantaged students. Rutter (1979) found that successful schools had a "climate of effectiveness" which included a strong emphasis on academic success, involving the formation and maintenance of a social group with norms and values that support the purpose of the school. The factors in schools that matter most in determining their capacity for positive influences on "pupils' behavior, attendance, exam success and delinquency" are "the characteristics of schools as social institutions" (Rutter, et al., 1979, p. 205). Therefore, positive and supportive experiences in schools are critical to the development of constructive personal and social behavior patterns. A commitment to overall school improvement and a dedication to school practices that enhance a positive climate are essential. Accordingly, the long-term program for reducing disruptive behavior involves a general improvement in classroom management and school climate. At the same time, however, the disruptive student contributes to school problems and must be offered a setting in which success is possible.

Effective Schools Research

A significant body of current research has measured school effectiveness according to a school's success with students from similar socio-economic backgrounds: usually urban, low-income students. A common, almost universal, finding of this research has been that effective schools assume that all children are educable and can learn the required content (Edmonds, 1980; Brookover, 1981; Lezotte, 1983). Moreover, it is assumed that the schooling process can effectively foster student learning, irrespective of any other agent, factor or constraint.

Studies of effective schools examine characteristics of schools rather than of students to explain student achievement. The studies generally focus on issues such as the relationship among members of the school community (e.g., among teachers, between teachers and students, between teachers and administrators), or the characteristics of academic achievement—features that are essentially within the realm of control of educators. Accordingly, research on the effective schools suggests that educators can increase student achievement by focusing attention on those school characteristics shown to be associated with learning.

The research also supports the assumption that schools that are unusually effective in achieving academic success have decreased levels of disruptive behavior in classrooms and on the school grounds (NIE Safe Schools Study, 1978).[1]

The effective schools research thus provides a framework around which to plan school improvement. For an elaboration of the research findings regarding the effective schools characteristics and their implications for school improvement, refer to the Pre-Seminar Reader on Implementing the "Effective Schools" Research prepared by the New Jersey Department of Education for an urban seminar conducted in May, 1983.

The alternative programs presented in this guide encompass many of the qualities discussed in the research on effective schools and learning, e.g., small size, less bureaucracy, staffs working more closely and creatively, greater parent involvement and student participation. A school can adopt such a model to deal with immediate problems of disruption while at the same time attending to improving overall effectiveness. Indeed the adoption of an alternative program can help address attention to other school issues by removing one source of problems (disruptive students) and providing them with effective educational experiences.

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[1]A review of the literature has identified six major elements associated with school effectiveness: 1) strong instructional leadership at the school level, i.e., the principal; 2) school climate which is safe, orderly and rewards achievement; 3) classroom instruction and management procedures that increase students' attention to learning tasks; 4) alignment of curricular objectives, instruction and assessment; 5) regular assessment and evaluation of teachers and students focusing on student achievement; 6) parent and community involvement in the educational process.

Philosophical and Psychological Assumptions of Alternative Programs

Alternative programs exist to help disruptive students. The help that is offered is academic but it is also personal, social and vocational. Therefore, the goal of such programs is to provide students with an educational process through which they experience opportunities to learn, have job satisfaction, increase their feelings of competence in dealing with personal problems, and develop more responsible behavior. Accomplishment of these objectives is based on a complex set of interacting psychological and emotional principles that are both necessary to accept and demanding to achieve.

The assumptions outlined below describe such a set of principles. They are abstracted from the Project STRIDE program[2] initiated through a Title III-IVC grant awarded by the New Jersey Department of Education.

1. Every student is both unique and valuable. In practice the school system expects students to conform to it. Students are required to surrender their individuality should there be a conflict between their individual capacities and the requirements of the school system. Seldom does the system bend to accommodate that student's uniqueness. Students need to learn how to retain their unique qualities while participating in a structured environment.

2. Each student is unique and valuable independent of his/her personal attractiveness. It is a human characteristic, shared by teachers, "to like best those who charm most." The result is that students with unappealing and/or hostile manners may be denied the opportunity to develop their abilities in a friendly and positive atmosphere.

3. Many times the worse a student is acting, the more he/she needs the friendly, positive and supportive atmosphere that his/her attitudes and behavior deny him/her. It is that student who, in the ordinary course of events, is least likely to inspire a positive response in others and who most needs that positive response. The most challenging professional obligation of those who work with the "disruptive" student is to remain positive when faced with the most determined provocation to negative or hostile reactions. These students frequently appear to court the hostility or rejection of those who are working with them. Teachers must make a prior intellectual commitment to the principle that they will not accept the students' invitation to reject them. Psychologically, this makes teaching in an alternative education program extremely difficult for the

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[2] STRIDE Teachers Manual, North Hunterdon Regional High School District. Prepared by Nancy Dontzin and Barbara Rivell, 1979.

teacher. To teach in such programs requires both conviction and determination since it is nice to be loved and not easy to remain positive, friendly and cheerful when faced with students who may be negative, unfriendly, and sullen. Many of these students are caught up in a vicious cycle of hostility and rejection. It is the teacher who must help break this cycle. The student is unable to do so alone.

4. The school must provide a learning situation in which the student can and will work. It is a truism in education that the school must start where the student is. In alternative programs it is assumed that in addition to providing work at an appropriate level, the student will be allowed to work and study in a manner that he/she finds congenial. Not all students learn best in the conventional classroom situation. An objection is frequently made that the real world may require more sustained concentration and not permit such flexibility. Education, like politics, however, is the art of the possible. We may keep before us the ideal we would like to achieve, but we must work with the possibilities that exist.

5. Students in the alternative school are likely to have a number of personal problems, and these personal problems may well be sufficiently pressing to present real obstacles to their school attendance and school achievement. For many of these students, schooling, although a desired activity, is not the first priority. Therefore, serving the educational needs of these students usually requires assisting in the resolution of personal problems. Such assistance will sometimes necessitate contact with other school district-based pupil personnel services specialists (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, social workers, nurses and learning disabilities teacher consultants) as well as with various community agencies.

When the set of philosophical and psychological assumptions outlined above are considered with the elements of the effective schools research and the alternative school concept, what emerges is an organizational, philosophical and conceptual framework which can facilitate the process of change in schools. This is especially true for those disruptive students who are not experiencing success and whose behavior is not tolerable in regular classroom settings.

III. MODELS

In the past ten to fifteen years an increasing number of local school districts across the country have established in-school alternative education programs to address the problems of disruptive students. These programs range from in-school study/suspension centers to counseling programs to separate schools designated as alternatives. These approaches reflect concerns about the impact of suspension or expulsion upon student achievement and a more general concern about the impact disruptive students have on school climate.

The program models described in this section of the guide can satisfy both an immediate concern to deal with the needs of the disruptive student and serve as an interim step in the more long-range process of institutional change. The research purports that disruptive behavior will decrease as school effectiveness increases, thereby diminishing the need for pull-out programs for disruptive students. This does not suggest that all student behavioral problems will vanish--the effective schools strategy is not a panacea--but that the current need for alternatives to suspension and expulsion for disruptive students will decrease.

Model Selection Process

The programs included in this section have been identified by the National School Resource Network (U.S. Department of Justice project, NSRN School Discipline Handbook, 1981) and the National Diffusion Network (U.S. Department of Education, Educational Programs That Work, 1984). These programs offer successful educational approaches that have shown positive results for the students and school districts involved. They vary in the approach to improving school climate and discipline. Some aim at helping students grow emotionally, as well as intellectually, while others give students and school staff new roles to play in the classroom, school and community. All are based on the conclusion that schools can become positive and effective learning environments for all our young people by using new methods and organizational arrangements to deal with disruptive youth, encouraging success, having high expectations, and working with students to make school an exciting, challenging and hospitable environment.

Criteria for Selection

All programs in this section were selected because they had demonstrated effectiveness. The successful programs identified through the National School Resource Network initiative include the following characteristics:

System-Wide Rather Than Individualistic. Their focus, planning and execution involve the entire school system (administrators, teachers, parents, students, community) not just the teacher and student in a "one-on-one" with the principal as referee.

Developmental Rather Than Regimented. They strive to promote an environment that fosters self-discipline rather than one whch forces conformity.

Preventive as Well as Remedial. They seek to remove precipitating causes of impermissible behavior, as well as to intervene when permissible limits have been exceeded.

Anticipatory Rather Than Reactive. They emphasize the detection of warning signs of trouble and early responses that defuse situations before they get out of hand.

Corrective Rather Than Punitive. They devise consequences of misbehavior which lead to restored acceptable behavior, not simply pain, for the student.

Reliant on Ongoing Internal Problemsolving Processes Rather Than on One-Shot, Externally Prescribed Remedies. Their plans are based on the maximal, regular, organized use of the entire system's resources, rather than on an overdependent, protracted use of outside help.

The most rigorously evaluated and validated programs in this section are the National Diffusion Network (NDN) programs. They are evaluated by the U.S. Department of Education's Joint Dissemination Review Panel (JDRP) prior to approval for dissemination. The panel is composed of 22 professional employees of the United States Education Department chosen for their experience in education and their ability to analyze evaluative evidence on the effectiveness of educational products and practices. Approval means that panel members have examined objective evidence of effectiveness submitted by the developer of the program and are convinced that the program has met its stated objectives at the original development or demonstration site. Approval by the JDRP also means that the program is deemed to be cost-effective and "exportable" to other sites for adoption.

The NDN State Facilitator, currently located at the EIRC in Sewell, New Jersey, has extensive information on NDN endorsed programs. In addition, personnel from all programs included in this publication were asked to submit program evaluation information, if available, to us. These documents will be made available for review through the county offices of education. See Appendix A for a listing of county office/RCSU resource people.

Program Descriptions

Once a program was selected for inclusion in this publication, New Jersey Department of Education staff telephoned each program officer to ascertain: (1) the operational status (as of December, 1983); (2) the current program contact person; and (3) the availability of evaluation and program information. Unless otherwise specified, all programs described in this section are currently in operation.

The programs are grouped by characteristics in the following categories: alternatives to suspensions; peer counseling; and comprehensive programs and approaches.

The formats chosen to present the program information is not intended to provide a complete and detailed description of each model but rather a

sense of an intervention concept that may be useful and adaptable to specific local school district needs. The description provides a brief statement about the essential program elements. This provides a broad overview of the program concept. Also refer to p. 41 (Planning and Implementation) for additional assistance in accessing other program information and/or the program development assistance available through the State Department of Education.

ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION[3]

Programs in this category focus on providing strategies that can be used as an alternative to school suspensions of disruptive students. The goal is to maintain these students' educational progress, while simultaneously decreasing their opportunities to disrupt the educational process in the classroom or school.

These programs provide an option to out-of-school suspension. The programs are based on the belief that keeping students who would otherwise be suspended at school--but keeping them isolated at least to some degree from other students--is more effective than giving those students a "vacation" away from school. More stability and security can be given to students; and when students are kept in the educational environment, their chances for successful re-entry into their regular classrooms are often greatly increased.

In general, most in-school suspension programs aim to better serve hard-to-reach students by placing them in programs where regular work can be completed, where reinforcement in basic skills can be provided and where counseling to improve their behavior is available.

The following programs are described in this section:

- Dothan Alternative School
- Alternative School
- COPE
- In-School Suspension Program
- Chestnut Alternative Program (CAP)
- Intercept: A Positive Alternative to Pupil Suspension, Truancy and Dropout

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[3]This description of In-School Suspension programs is abstracted from the NSRN School Discipline Handbook, Washington, D.C.: National School Resource Network, 1981.

Type: Alternatives To Suspension
Source: NSRN

PROGRAM: Dothan Alternative School

Contact person	Andy Fain, Director (205) 793-1397	Dothan City Schools 500 Dusy Street Dothan, Al 36301
Grade level(s) served	6-12	
Support base	A combination of Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA) and local funds supported the school initially. Currently funded by Educational Consolidation Improvements Act (ECIA) Chapter II and local district.	
Date program began	1976	

DESCRIPTION:

Purpose	The Dothan Alternative School provides an alternative to school suspensions by keeping students with serious disciplinary problems within the school system but in a classroom in a separate school near the administrative offices. The school seeks to modify unacceptable behavior through counseling and to reinforce the regular classroom by intensive academic work.
Intervention approaches used	Counseling and assistance with academic work is provided by the staff who also act as liaison to the school system, parents, and court officials. Daily records are maintained. There are no breaks during the day: lunch is served in the classroom, and supervision is provided for visiting the restrooms.
Curriculum emphasis	Individualized, structured academic assignments are provided by the regular classroom teacher. The staff assists students with their academic assignments and with finding ways to change inappropriate behavior.

STUDENTS:

Number and kind served	On an average day, 20 to 25 students are in attendance.

Referral process	Students who have serious disciplinary problems are referred by their home school for a three to ten day period. For the second and third referrals, the number of days spent in the alternative school are doubled. On the fourth referral, the home school files a petition with the court, stating that the school system has exhausted its efforts to modify behavior.

STAFFING:

Kinds, numbers, skills	The staff consists of a full-time teacher, a full-time counselor and a part-time "crisis counselor."
Inservice needs	N/A

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

Extensive program and evaluation materials are available.

Type: Alternatives To Suspension
Source: NSRN

PROGRAM: Alternative School

Contact person	Russell Phillips Director Administrative Services (412) 346-6585	Farrell School District Roemer Boulevard Farrell, PA 16121
Grade level(s) served:	10-12	
Support base	Initial funding was provided by local district. Currently the program is funded by a local consortium, Job Training Partnership Association.	
Date program began	1974	

DESCRIPTION:

Purpose

The program provides disruptive students with individual tutoring and supervision for four to ten days from an instructor and counselor.

Intervention approaches used

Subject assignments, which must be completed during the program, are provided by regular teachers and form the basis for the program's instruction. The counselor and teacher maintain contact with each student's home school to provide progress reports and facilitate return to the regular classroom. Because the program is housed away from the regular school, contact with peers is restricted. Students may, however, participate in extra-curricular activities.

Individual counseling is provided throughout the student's enrollment in the program. Parent conferences are scheduled as appropriate.

Curriculum emphasis

The alternative school is designed to be an extension of the school curriculum. Classroom assignments are provided each day by the regular teacher.

In addition to regular class work, special learning resources as well as supplemental assignments are available to provide remediation in any area of academic difficulty.

Students are evaluated before entry into the program. At the end of the suspension period, the student's progress is noted on an evaluation form that is given to the principal at the home school.

Students:

Number and kind served: Approximately two to fifteen students are assigned to the school at any given time. Depending on the nature of the violation, students may be assigned from four to ten days. Most students have had previous out-of-school suspensions for violations including disruptive behavior in class, fighting and truancy.

Referral process: Students are referred by the principal. Informal hearings are held prior to placement in the program, with parental notification.

STAFFING:

Kinds, numbers, skills: The program staff consists of one certified teacher who provides individual supervision and tutoring, two teacher aides who proctor all subject assignments and assist in tutoring, and a counselor and a psychologist who work with groups and conduct individual counseling.

In-service needs: N/A

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

Materials are available.

Type: Alternatives To Suspension
Source: NSRN

PROGRAM: COPE

Contact person	Stevie Smith Director (412) 935-5767	COPE Center North Allegheny Senior High School 10375 Perry Highway Wexford, PA 15090
Grade level(s) served	6-12 6-8, occasionally	
Support base	Fifty percent of the initial funding was provided through Vocational Education. For the 1983-84 school year, funding was provided by the local district.	
Date program began	1977	

DESCRIPTION:

Purpose	The program provides counseling and learning opportunities for students who would otherwise be suspended. COPE has two primary purposes: to serve as an in-school suspension center and to prevent serious behavior problems from developing.
Intervention approaches used	Values clarification, group discussions and self awareness exercises are emphasized. The program attempts to identify student problems (academic, social, emotional) and find resources to alleviate them; establish a positive climate in which successful learning can take place; maximize the use of vocational programs; help students take responsibility for their own actions; and return students to their regular classes with their behavior and attitudes reasonably altered. COPE is housed in a classroom within the high school building and is not isolated from the school's mainstream.
Curriculum emphasis	The program is aimed at improving students' self-image by improving their competency in social and academic skills. All students continue their regular school work while participating in the program.

STUDENTS:

Number and kind served	More than 300 students are served. There are two target populations: (1) students who violate school rules and regulations and therefore would be suspended; and (2) students whose behavior affects their achievement, attendance and interpersonal relationships.
Referral process	Referrals may be made by teachers, principals, parents, outside agencies or the students themselves. After a conference with the pupil's parent, the principal assigns the student to the program from one to ten days.

STAFFING:

Kinds, numbers, skills	The staff consists of a full-time director with teaching and counseling certification and two aides, one of whom has certification in reading; the other, a degree in sociology/psychology.
In-service needs	Awareness sessions for staff and community are recommended, along with ongoing in-service to address particular needs of students and staff.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

Descriptive materials are available, along with instruments used to diagnose and evaluate student performance.

Type: Alternatives To Suspension
Source: NSRN

PROGRAM: In-School Suspension Program

Contact person	Edward Betts Principal (215) 688-8980	Valley Forge Junior High School 105 West Walker Road Wayne, PA 19087
Grade level(s) served	7-9	
Support base	Local district	
Date program began	1970	

DESCRIPTION:

Purpose	The purpose of the program is to remove disruptive students from the regular classroom setting. Students continue their studies and must complete daily assignments provided by their regular teachers. Program staff provide counseling and assistance with academic work.
Intervention approaches used	The program is housed in the office area of the assistant principal. Daily assignments are secured by program staff. After completion, assignments are evaluated by the student's regular teacher. The school counselor works with students and their parents.
Curriculum emphasis	A major objective of the program is for students to continue their regular studies. Program staff provide individualized instruction and tutoring as necessary. Return to the regular classroom is automatic after the student has served his or her suspension period.

STUDENTS:

Number and kind served	All students who are placed on in-service suspension are served.
Referral process	Referrals are made by any adult in the building to the assistant principal or principal. Parents are notified of their children's participation in the program.

STAFFING:

Kinds, numbers, skills	The staff consists of one full-time person.
In-service needs	N/A

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

None

Type: Alternatives To Suspension
Source: NSRN

PROGRAM: Chestnut Alternative Program (CAP)

Contact person	Ray Morin Teacher/Supervisor (413) 787-7285	Chestnut Street Junior High School 495 Chestnut Street Springfield, MA 01107
Grade level(s) served	7-9	
Support base	Initial funding was provided by Massachusetts Chapter 636 funds. It is currently funded by the local district.	
Date program began	1977	

DESCRIPTION:

Purpose:	The program is based on the philosophy that discipline is educational in nature, rather than a matter of controlling behavior. CAP is an in-school suspension program in which students receive individualized tutorial assistance and counseling.
Intervention approaches used	Counseling is an important aspect of the program and is offered in both group sessions and on an individual basis. It aims to improve the student's attitudes toward self and others, thus building self-esteem and self-confidence so that the formal school program may resume. Motivation is often facilitated by behavior modification plans. The student's progress, both academic and behavioral, is assessed every five days.
Curriculum emphasis	The curriculum focuses intensively on basic skills. Assignments are provided by the regular classroom teacher; students are given full credit for all work completed while in the program. Staff members work on an individual basis with each enrollee, focusing on the student's unique difficulties.

STUDENTS:

Number and kind served	Approximately 14 students are assigned to the program at any given time.

Referral process	Referrals are made by the classroom teacher to the principal. Depending on the severity of the violation, students are assigned to the program for six to ten days. Parents are notified and are required to sign an agreement to have their child enrolled in the alternative school.

STAFFING:

Kinds, numbers, skills	The staff consists of one supervisor/teacher, one counselor, and the services of an assistant principal.
In-service needs	N/A

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

Some evaluation and program materials are available.

Type: Alternatives to Suspension
Source: NDN

PROGRAM: Intercept: A Positive Alternative to Pupil Suspension, Truancy and Dropout.

Contact person	Richard Mauer 914-941-7700	Roosevelt Education Center Administration Building Ossining Public Schools 190 Croton Avenue Ossining, NY 10562
Grade level(s) served	9-12	
Support base	Initial funding was provided by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title IV-C. Currently funded by local district.	
Date program began	1976	

DESCRIPTION:

Purpose	Intercept is a teacher-training program that addresses problems of student discipline, truancy, and chronic academic failure. The project provides preservice and in-service training to deal with adolescents who have shown chronic disruptive, failing, and truant behavior, and to address such problems before these difficulties fully develop.
Intervention approaches used	Students are provided an alternative academic program in classrooms within the school with a maximum teacher-student ratio of 1:15. A goal of the program is to return students to the regular high school program.
Curriculum emphasis	Three programs developed by Project Intercept are COPE, Learning Center, and the Learning Cluster. In the first two programs, targeted students are placed in self-contained classes for two thirds of the day, and may take electives or attend vocational training programs during the remainder of the day. The Learning Cluster offers a preventive treatment program to ninth-grade students where one quarter of the day is spent in English and social studies.

STUDENTS:

Number and kind served — The program serves 80 students who have high rates of failure and truancy, along with a history of disruptive behavior.

Referral process — Students are referred to the program by guidance counselors. Parents and students may request that students be admitted to the program.

STAFFING:

Kinds, numbers, skills — All staff in the program are taught effective discipline procedures, clasroom management techniques, and instructional skills. A peer consulting team is developed for group critique and support.

Management skills for establishing an alternative academic program for potential dropouts are also taught.

In addition, teachers receive training in group counseling; students who participate in this component learn to demonstrate more appropriate interpersonal skills and improve self-concept. Family intervention and parent-training skills are taught to staff who are responsible for parent contact. This component reinforces changes taking place at school and helps parents deal more effectively with all of their children.

Five classroom teachers work full time in the program.

In-service needs — At least three days of training must be provided to a teacher designated as the key person to adopt the project. Once a teacher has been trained, the project has a highly effective method of peer-critiquing, which can be used to easily train other teachers in most subject areas in the program's discipline, classroom management, and instructional procedures.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

Awareness materials are available at no cost. Visitors are welcome at project site any time by appointment. Project staff are available to attend awareness meetings, training, implementation, and follow-up services (costs to be negotiated).

An adopting district should have a copy of the Teacher, Counseling, Management, and Family Intervention Manual ($100). A district does not need to provide additional staff, equipment, or supplies. Training sessions can accommodate up to 30 teachers with manuals provided at a reduced rate.

PEER COUNSELING[4]

Peer counseling--or students counseling students--is a way to utilize the tremendous influence peers have on one another. The negative and destructive behavior of some students can often be changed by rechanneling peer influence to defuse potentially violent situations and by dealing with student problems before they are translated into more serious antisocial behavior. Thus, peer counseling is a means for youth to learn how to use the power of their personal influence in constructive ways and to help other youth make positive changes.

The following program is described in this section:

- Peer Culture Development (PCD)

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[4]This description of Peer Counseling is abstracted from the NSRN School Discipline Handbook, Washington, D.C.: National School Resource Network, 1981.

Type: Peer Counseling
Source: NSRN

PROGRAM: Peer Culture Development (PCD)

Contact person	Bill Kottman Assistant Principal (312) 236-4607	228 North LaSalle Street Room 1264 Chicago, IL 60601
Grade level(s) served	6-12 (major emphasis) 7-8 (minor emphasis)	
Support base	Department of Justice, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) provided initial funding. Currently negotiating with LEAA and foundations for continuation.	
Date program began	1974	

DESCRIPTION:

Purpose

The program is based on the premise that peers have tremendous influence on one another, that human beings derive self-confidence through being of service to others, and that a person who has learned effective strategies for solving his or her own problems can help others by sharing them. The program operates on the following principles: establishing group attitudes of trust and confidentiality so that caring and sharing can occur; focusing peer influence on more positive behaviors and values; and dealing with the present situation.

Intervention approaches used

Group meetings that follow a specific agenda are considered the pivotal activity in the development of responsibility for self and others. The basic model for this approach involves (a) reporting of problems by students, (b) problem solving discussion in which student participants analyze and resolve the problem of the day, (c) a final summary of the problem and solution by the group leader.

In one semester students participate in 90 group sessions together, which contributes to development of deep care and concern as well as the production of a more positive life style.

Curriculum emphasis	The program meets one period per day, usually during the pupil's gym or study hall period. Therefore, the student's regular academic schedule is continued without interruption. Students receive academic credit for participation in the program.

STUDENTS:

Number and kind served	Students are placed in single-sex groups of from 12 to 15 students, heterogeneous in race, grade level, academic ability and behavioral characteristics. Students are placed in PCD classes for a semester.
Referral process	Student participation in the peer counseling program is voluntary. There is, however, a discipline referral system operating through the discipline office. Disruptive students are referred for counseling, with their regular classroom teacher's approval.

STAFFING:

Kinds, numbers, skills	Four to six teachers conduct training and implementation on a part-time basis. These teachers act as group leaders and liaison with Peer Culture Development, Inc.
In-service needs	Teachers are given training in intergroup counseling by PCD, Inc.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

Numerous evaluation materials are available. The Center for Social Organizations of Schools, Johns Hopkins University, has recently completed a three-year evaluation of the program.

Training materials are being developed and will be available for a fee.

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS AND APPROACHES

Comprehensive strategies that cut across curricular areas can help create a school climate in which students can freely learn. The range of strategies can be wide and varied. In this section, the emphasis is on classroom management models, intervention strategies and occupational training and counseling specifically for disruptive students.

The following programs are described in this section:

- PASS
- Diversified Educational Experiences Program (DEEP)
- Project COFFEE (Cooperative Federation for Educational Experiences)

Type: Comprehensive Programs and Approaches

Source: NDN & NSRN

PROGRAM: Positive Alternatives to Student Suspensions (PASS)*

Contact person	John C. Kackley Supervisor/Consultant, or Ralph E. Bailey, Director (813) 823-6696, Ext. 45	Pupil Personnel Services Demonstration Project Euclid Center 1015 Tenth Avenue North St. Petersburg, FL 33705
Grade level(s) served	9-12 (major emphasis) 6-8 (minor emphasis)	
Support base	Initial funding was provided by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title III. Currently funded by local district.	
Date program began	1972	

DESCRIPTION:

Purpose	The program provides intervention strategies designed to prevent or minimize disruptive behavior in secondary students.
Intervention approaches used	Major activities of the PASS program include individual and group consultations that assist school faculties in developing techniques for dealing effectively with teenage students, affective education and personal development programs for students and teachers, timeout rooms managed by a teacher or paraprofessional where students talk out problems and complete academic assignments, individuals and group counseling for students experiencing serious interpersonal confrontations, and counseling for parents.
Curriculum emphasis	"Staff Development for a Positive School" and "Communication Activities in the Regular Classroom" help students and teachers get to know and appreciate each other. "A Student's School Survival Course" helps students who have problems learn how to interact more effectively within their school and home environment.

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*Adopted by Northern Valley Regional High School
Central Avenue
Old Tappan, New Jersey 07675
Contact: John Conlon, Guidance Director (201)768-3200 x415

STUDENTS:

Number and kind served	Approximately 500 to 600 students per year are served.
Referral process	Students with behavior problems are referred by teachers, guidance counselors or deans. A referred student meets with the guidance counselor, principal, psychologist and parents to work out a contract that the student will fulfill.

STAFFING:

Kinds, numbers, skills	The psychologist, social worker, or counselor providing leadership needs an appropriate Master's degree and must be proficient in planning and implementing staff-development programs as well as in providing direct services for students. He/she must be a skilled group leader able to conduct humanistic activities, survival courses, and encounter groups. The leader also provides training and consultation for the time-out room workers, who need at least a B.A. in one of the applied behavioral sciences and related experience or recent training in establishing helping relationships with youth.
In-service needs	Two-day workshop with a one-day follow-up workshop.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

Awareness materials are available at no cost. Visitors are welcome at project site by appointment. Project staff are available to attend out-of-state awareness meetings (all expenses must be paid). Training is also available at adopter site. Implementation and follow-up services are available to adopters (all expenses must be paid).

Type: Comprehensive Programs and Approaches

Source: NDN

PROGRAM: Diversified Educational Experiences Program (DEEP)

Contact person	Jane Connett Director (316) 522-2233	Wichita Public Schools 640 North Emporia Wichita, KS 67214
Grade level(s) served	9-12	
Support base	Initial funding was provided by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title III. For the 1983-84 school year, funding was provided by the local district.	
Date program began	1970	

DESCRIPTION

Purpose	The major goal of Project DEEP is to develop an instructional process for secondary school classrooms that allows instructors to create an academic environment emphasizing success for every learner while decreasing learner hostility to educational institutions.
Intervention approaches used	Students in the DEEP classroom identify needs, formulate objectives, develop tasks based upon these objectives, present group and individual projects based upon fulfillment of objectives and receive evaluations. DEEP offers learners in academic subjects alternative ways to create, gather, develop and display information. Extensive use is made of electronic and nonelectronic media. DEEP classes meet one period per day each semester. The classroom environment is casual, open, trusting, and task-oriented. A workshop atmosphere exists.
Curriculum emphasis	The DEEP classroom management model is adaptable to a variety of school structures. It can serve as an alternative within the traditional high school, junior high school, or middle school or in a separate alternative school. The management model can be utilized in many academic subject areas, primarily language arts, social studies, and science. The model is adaptable to regular, modular, and other types of flexible scheduling.

STUDENTS:

Number and kind served	Approximately 500 students in three schools participate in the program. The program is designed for students who have discipline problems, have poor attendance records, are apathetic toward learning and are potential dropouts.
Referral process	Students can elect to participate in DEEP classrooms or they may be referred by teachers.

STAFFING

Kinds, numbers, skills	DEEP teachers are usually volunteers from the existing staff. Their role is that of advisor, consultant and learning systems manager. Teachers must be willing to teach one or more DEEP classes along with their regular classes.
In-service needs	Teachers are trained as learning facilitators. An emphasis is placed on a conflict-management process that is based on human relations and peer group interaction as well as on teacher-student interaction. Teachers are provided management charts and materials along with evaluation procedures.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Awareness materials are available at no cost. Visitors are welcome any time by appointment at project site and additional demonstration sites in home state and out-of-state. Project staff are available to attend out-of-state awareness meetings (costs to be negotiated). Training is conducted at the project site (costs to be negotiated). Training is also available at the adopter site (costs to be negotiated). Implementation and follow-up services are available to adopters (costs to be negotiated).

DEEP training manuals with student activities cost $5 per in-service workshop participant.

Type: Comprehensive Programs and Approaches
Source: NDN

PROGRAM: Project COFFEE (Cooperative Federation for Educational Experiences)

Contact person	John R. Phillipio Project Director or Jane Garvey Project Coordinator (617) 987-1626 or 1627	Oxford High School Annex Main Street Oxford, MA 01540
Grade level(s) served	Most students are dropouts who are subsequently placed in grades 8-12. While this program addresses drop outs, it may be used as an alternative for disruptive students. However, it was not validated with this population. School districts would need to consider its potential. Its focus on job skills is attractive.	
Support base	Vocational Education	
Date program began	1978	

DESCRIPTION:

Purpose	Project COFFEE is a comprehensive instructional and occupational training and counseling program. It was developed in response to the employment demands of high technology and the increasing number of alienated, disaffected secondary school-age students as a comprehensive instructional program.
Intervention approaches used	Project COFFEE was developed by a regional cooperative federation of seven school districts and a highly successful partnership with high technology business and industry. This partnership has provided educational assistance in curriculum development, staff training, occupational training materials, equipment acquisition, competency-based assessments, internship experiences, and more. The program functions very well as a school within a school; however a realistic work environment with state-of-the-art equipment is required.
Curriculum	Four components make up the curriculum: an academic component that provides relevant (occupational and life-coping) basic skills instruction based on an individualized educational plan; an occupational

component that provides hands-on educational experiences in an adult-like high technology work environment while reinforcing basic skills; a counseling component that provides occupational and emotional support utilizing state, regional, and local social service agencies; and a physical education component that offers a program of recreational activities adapted to enable students to develop a sense of self-accomplishment and group cooperation. Each occupational program features job entry skills, job placement skills, shadowing experiences, and a related work-study program. Occupational components include: electronic assembly, data processing, building and grounds maintenance, horticulture/agriculture and distributive education.

STUDENTS:

Number and kind served	The program serves 120 students, between the ages of 15-22 who have dropped out of high school.
Referral process	To gain admission to the program, students must contact the guidance counselor at the last high school attended. The guidance counselor, in turn, contacts the program guidance counselor. Students are given a battery of tests to determine placement.

STAFFING:

Kinds, numbers, skills	Approximately 20 secondary teachers and guidance counselors participate in the program. Teachers have certification in vocational education.
In-service needs	Two weeks in-service training are needed.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

Program materials include: program manual, basic skills curriculum guide, guidelines for industry/education linkage, guidelines for inter-agency collaboration/community outreach, procedures manual for development of competency-based assessments, and diagnostic needs assessment survey manual for student survival skills course. These are available at a nominal charge.

Awareness materials are available at no cost. Visitors are welcome at the project site by appointment. Project staff can attend out-of-state awareness meetings (costs to be arranged). Training is available for potential out-of-state adopters at their site or at the developer/demonstrator site. Follow-up technical assistance is also available.

IV. PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Instituting any new program requires careful planning. District planning should address two separate issues: the content of the program and the process of implementing it. This section of the guide addresses what needs to be done to insure program success after the decision to implement the program has been made.

Program Development Assistance

Assistance to local school districts in the program planning, development and implementation process is available through the newly established curriculum delivery system of the New Jersey Department of Education.

The county offices of education represent one component of this system. They will assist districts as part of their planning process responsibility. The county office will help districts identify local needs, review objectives and arrange for technical assistance. In addition, they will provide a local information exchange or "grassroots" network to help local educational leaders identify other local school districts which have dealt successfully with providing alternative education programs for disruptive students.

The Department of Education's curriculum delivery system also includes three Regional Curriculum Service Units (RCSUs) to assist school districts implement local initiatives. RCSUs deliver curriculum services to school districts in conjunction with the county offices in order to facilitate and/or assist local efforts in continuously improving the education offered to their students. Specific services offered through the RCSUs include: dissemination of curriculum materials and information; curriculum planning, adaptation and development; networking successful programs and practices; and training. RCSUs, like the county offices, use a network approach to help find practical answers to district needs.

The RCSUs and the county offices of education are part of the Department of Education's planned system[5] for the development and delivery of curriculum products and services to schools in response to specific initiatives. The services of the RCSUs are available through each county office of education. A listing of Department of Education staff knowledgeable about alternative education programs for disruptive students is included in Appendix A of this guide. Districts are encouraged to contact staff members at the beginning of the program planning process. In addition, the NDN State Facilitator helps match districts with NDN programs and helps them adopt and implement those programs.

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[5]See New Jersey Department of Education Publiction, "Implementation of the Public School Education Act of 1975, Curriculum Delivery System," March 1983, for a detailed explanation of the delivery system.

Initial Steps

The steps in successful implementation begin with choosing the alternative education model that is appropriate for the identified student needs. In addition to the models described in the previous section of this guide, the county office and RCSU staff can help identify additional alternative education programs that have been implemented in school districts throughout New Jersey.

Next, staff must be selected and trained to use the program. Throughout the implementation process, the program should be systematically monitored to provide needed program adjustments and further staff development. It is crucial that district and school administrators demonstrate their support for the alternative program and for planning its implementation. Each of these steps is discussed below.

Choice

Choosing an appropriate model involves consideration of two related issues. First, the model of alternative education must be appropriate to the particular types of disruptive students found in a school. Second, the model must be appropriate to the school and community. Procedures for determining appropriateness are both formal and informal.

The most formal procedure is to study data about the disruptive youth in a given school or building. In doing so, the goal is to determine student needs that the school is not meeting. For example, some students are disruptive because regular school work is too easy; others, because it is too hard. Formal (test scores) and informal (teacher observation) indications of student ability can form the basis for this determination. A second set of considerations involves the types of disruptions (e.g., defiance, violence, vandalism) and when and where they tend to occur (e.g., in the cafeteria, classrooms, during passing time). The sources of data for this could be principal logs or suspension reports. Finally, a district or school should consider the nature of the disruptive students' goals -- are they (realistic or not) seeking further education or immediate employment? Counselors should be able to provide this information.

Assessing the appropriateness of a particular model to the school or community is probably less formal. For example, if teachers and counselors in a school have generally worked closely together, a model that builds on that historical relationship would be a natural. Further, school resources may not allow the school to section off a large portion of the building so models that absolutely require this would be inappropriate.

Once it is determined that major components of a given model are appropriate to the setting, it may be necessary to adapt other parts of the program. The models presented in this guide have been effective and can be implemented in additional schools. However, no two schools are exactly alike and some changes <u>may</u> be needed to ensure a proper match. Altering <u>major</u> features of the model probably indicates an improper choice, but adaptation of the model can be necessary and desirable.

Who is involved in choosing the appropriate model is closely related to the next issue--staff selection. It is a good idea for at least some of those responsible for implementing the alternative to be involved in the data analysis and program selection. In that way, they will develop a better understanding of the students to be served and of the program. It is absolutely crucial that a district and school administrator be involved in data gathering, analysis and program selection. This builds support from all teachers and also enables administrators to provide needed help as the program is implemented.

Further, based on the limited number of program options planned for disruptive students only, districts are encouraged to experiment with those components of the approaches described in this guide and to add additional components based on experience and degree of success. The exchange of information concerning those elements that contribute to success is encouraged.

Staff Selection and Education

Selection of staff to be involved in an alternative education program for disruptive youth involves two major considerations. First, staff must have at least the basic skills required by the program. For example, if a program has a major emphasis on teaching skilled trades, some staff should have experience and/or competence in that area. Second, although relying on a volunteer force of teachers deeply committed to providing educational opportunities to disruptive youth might be desirable, such people may be hard to find. After all, the students who will be involved are problems -- perhaps the most difficult youth in the school. Administrators may have to assign teachers to the program, within district regulations. If that is the case, two guidelines should be followed:

1. The program, if it is to succeed, should not be used as a "dumping ground" for poor teachers or as "punishment" for teachers who have created problems for administrators; and

2. Administrators need to acknowledge the problems presented while, at the same time, emphasizing the professional rewards involved.

Desirable Teacher Characteristics

In addition to the specific skills required in the alternative education program that is chosen, staff in the program should be caring, accepting, dedicated teachers, counselors and administrators. Programs, no matter how innovative, creative, costly or cost-effective, cannot succeed without people. Teachers and administrators are the key to effective programs. In the final analysis it is the quality of people who work with and in the programs that makes the difference. One study (Carnes, 1972) identified the following desirable characteristics for teachers:

1) Attractive appearance

2) Pleasant personality

3) Sense of humor

4) Emotional stability

5) Ability to use a variety of approaches in teaching

6) A sense of empathy for the disadvantaged

7) More interest in student success than student failure

8) Ability to maintain an informal atmosphere in the classroom

9) The ability to encourage student participation in classroom activities

10) Flexible standards for grading students

11) Emphasis on teaching students rather than subject matter

12) Ability to recognize that the language of students is closely tied to home or neighborhood influences

13) Extensive knowledge of the subject content they teach

14) Genuine concern for the students

15) Ability to accept results of standardized tests as indicators of students present academic ability while rejecting such tests as instruments for measuring native intelligence

16) Positive and realistic attitudes about themselves and their abilities

17) Ability to view students in a positive way and favorable expectations of students' successes

18) Feeling of empathy for students

19) Ability to maintain control of the classroom without ridicule or embarrassment.

Staff Development

Once a model is chosen and staff selected to participate, it is necessary to provide staff development. Any innovation requires change on the part of the professionals involved. Such change is never easily accomplished, which is not surprising when we consider what it entails. It involves learning new skills. It involves developing a conceptual understanding of a different approach so that reactions to the unpredictable (and school life is characterized by the unpredictable) are congruent with the program. It involves developing new relationships among staff and between staff and students. And it involves loss of the old. People

need time (and help) to integrate new ways into their lives. In short, program implementation involves a re-socialization--and that only happens over time.

In order to facilitate implementation--change, re-socialization--on the school level, district officials must not only say they support the effort (and it is an effort), but also demonstrate that support by reallocating resources. They must encourage in-service programs that address the change--sessions in which the program is explained and the manifestations in practice are demonstrated. Further, there must be ongoing assistance provided. Sometimes this resembles coaching, sometimes "handholding."

What is crucial in all this is that individuals involved in the implementation must have an opportunity to interact--to develop shared language and understanding, to internalize the meaning of the change, and to apply the general (the alternative model) to the particular (this state, district, school, and classroom).

The steps in staff development are as follows:

1. An intensive workshop or seminar that introduces the elements of the alternative. Participants should be able to ask clarifying questions, to "rehearse" required activities through role play or simulations, to develop materials and to share concerns. This should occur prior to the school year of implementation.

2. During the school year, staff development should take three forms: First, there should be formal sessions that bring together participants for further work that expands and deepens their understanding of the alternative. Topics for such sessions can be identified through the use of information gathered through systematic monitoring (see below). Second, administrators or peers should provide "coaching" to teachers involved. Finally, participants should meet to share concerns, engage in problem solving, plan future actions, and analyze what is occurring.

Evaluation

Each of the models presented has its own particular objectives. The success of the project--and the decision whether to continue it--can be judged by how well it meets those objectives. However, because the first year of program implementation is frequently difficult as staff learns how to carry out activities, it is probably best not to use evaluation results to decide whether or not to continue the program until at least two years have elapsed. Evaluation data should be collected and analyzed, however, as an early warning system to allow participants to strenthen weak points in the program.

Another sort of monitoring involves an ongoing assessment of the need for the program. If, as a result of other changes in the school, incidents of disruption decrease to the point that a full scale alternative program is no longer needed, a district should consider dropping it. If analysis

of the types of students that are causing disruption indicates a change in their needs, the district should consider a different model.

A final type of monitoring involves the implementation process itself. Administrators and peers should assess how well program elements are being implemented. Are there some program components that are causing particular problems? What support and staff development can be supplied to solve these problems? Such monitoring requires an atmosphere of trust so that participants are not fearful that admission of problems will be used to justify negative personnel evaluations. Therefore, it is necessary for the administrators to see themselves as--and to act as--participants in the innovation.

Administrative Support

Very few programs can be implemented without support and commitment from district and school administrators. Often administrators think that by announcing their commitment at a faculty meeting, they have indicated support. While this is necessary, it is insufficient. They need to show -- by word and deed -- ongoing involvement in the program. Because there are many demands on administrators' time, this is not easy. But it is necessary if the program is to be implemented.

How can administrators demonstrate their support within the constraints of their jobs? Very simply, by showing interest. They should attend many of the meetings devoted to selecting an appropriate model and request one-page summaries of those meetings they cannot attend. They should be active participants in the pre-implementation workshop/seminar and should attend as many as possible of the formal staff development sessions during implementation. They should observe program teachers for reasons beyond personnel evaluation. They should instigate faculty room talk about the program. They should facilitate appropriate monitoring and staff development. And they should ask "How's it going?" -- listen to the response and try to help with problems. Above all, they should support the staff's honest efforts to educate difficult students.

Parental and Community Support

Parents are concerned about school discipline as demonstrated by their annual responses to the Gallop Poll of education concerns. Thus, the school should communicate the plans to develop systematic approaches for dealing with disruptive students to all parents. The parents of the disruptive students frequently need assistance understanding their roles and contributions to the behavior creating problems for the students and the schools. Efforts should be made to include the parents in the planning and to inform parents of strategies that they may use at home to reinforce and support the school program for their children. In some instances, referral to social service agencies providing family counseling and assistance may be warranted.

Other community agencies frequently provide experiences for students that can enhance the program the school selects. Since schools cannot provide all experiences that may contribute to students' change in behavior, the school should be aware of athletic, cultural, and student volunteer

opportunities in the community. Staff of these agencies may be included in initial planning of the school program and may be able to present out-of-school opportunities that support the school program.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
County Office/RCSU
Directory of Resource People

NORTHERN REGION

Dr. Elena Scambio Coordinating County Superintendent		201/673-3900
Bergen County	Morton Ruden	201/935-1500
Essex County	Peter Polidoro	201/673-3900
Hudson County	John Dileo	201/795-6547
Morris County	Doris Smith	201/285-6151
Passaic County	Colleen Agresti	201/881-7123
Sussex County	Judy Kohlbach	201/383-2521
Warren County	Jane Gould	201/475-5361, Ext. 214
Regional Curriculum Services Unit	Gail Hecht	201/672-3036

CENTRAL REGION

Dr. Virginia Brinson Coordinating County Superintendent		201/390-6000
Hunterdon County	Frank Arch	201/788-1414
Mercer County	Vincent Acquaviva	609/989-6677
Middlesex County	Mary Jane Guidette	201/745-3490
Monmouth County	Marie Gdula	201/431-7810
Ocean County	Janet Beronio	201/929-2078
Somerset County	Ray Toscano	201/231-7171
Union County	Midge Nigro	201/233-9310
Regional Curriculum Services Unit	Bill Davis	201/390-9310

SOUTHERN REGION

Mr. Peter Contini Coordinating County Superintendent		609/468-6500
Atlantic County	Thomas DiBiaso	609/625-7000, Ext. 415
Burlington County	Michael Baltish	609/261-5060
Camden County	Joe Corcoran	609/757-8987
Cape May County	Betty Zaleski	609/465-7911, Ext. 290
Cumberland County	Helen Dubois	609/451-8000, Ext. 410
Gloucester County	Glen Earl	609/468-6500
Salem County	John Cornew	609/769-2700
Regional Curriculum Services Unit	Leon Trusty John Khanlian	609/468-6500

APPENDIX B

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